

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GABORO 02091 011821Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 CU-04 /065 W

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO USIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: PRC SCORES PROPAGANDA COUP

REF: (A) GABORONE 1467-C, 10/28/75 (B) USIA 28707-C, 11/22/75

1. THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA SCORED A PROPAGANDA VICTORY THIS YEAR THAT MAY INFLUENCE THE YOUTH OF BOTSWANA FOR YEARS TO COME.

2. THROUGH AN HOUR-LONG FILM PRODUCED TO MARK THE COUNTRY'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY, THE PRC HAS DISTORTED BOTSWANA'S HISTORY TO ITS OWN ENDS. OVER PASSABLE BUT UNSPECTACULAR FILM WORK, THE NARATION FREQUENTLY REFERS TO THE OPPRESSION OF COLONIAL RULE, PLUNDERING OF BOTSWANA'S WEALTH BY FOREIGN CAPITALISTS AND THE GALLANT STRUGGLE BY THE BOTSWANA TO THROW OFF THE YOKE OF IMPERIALISM.

3. THE FACT THAT THE FILM - AS THE ONLY DOCUMENTARY ON THE NATION'S HISTORY - WILL BE SHOWN TO ALL PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLSTUDENTS, PROMPTED A NATIONAL LEADER TO REMARK, "ITS A SHAME THAT OUR CHILDREN WILL BE SUBJECTED TO SUCH A DISTORTED VERSION OF OUR HISTORY"

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4. THE FILM OPENS WITH VARIOUS SHOTS OF TRADITIONAL DANCING AND SMILING FACES.

THE NARRATOR EXCLAIMS, "THE BOTSWANA PEOPLE ARE DANCING. THE BOTSWANA PEOPLE ARE HAPPY - - -

WHERE COULD ONE HAVE FOUND THIS HAPPINESS UNDER COLONIAL RULE?"

5. AFTER A SERIES OF SHOTS OF ARTIFACTS, AN ABRUPT CUT TO A SEA BATTLE ALLOWS THE NARRATOR TO POINT OUT THAT BOTSWANA WAS "OCCUPIED" BY COLONIALISTS IN 1885 (WHEN IN FACT THE LEADING CHIEF WENT TO ENGLAND TO ASK THAT THE AREA BE MADE A PROTECTORATE TO HALT INCURSIONS BY THE BOERS). A SEQUENCE OF STILL DRAWINGS OF 1800 BATTLES BETWEEN BLACKS AND WHITES - SLAVE TRADERS AND GOLD MINES, ALLOWS THE NARRATION TO RANT ON ABOUT THE GLORIOUS STRUGGLE OF THE PEOPLE TO THROW OFF THE YOKE OF IMPERIALIST DOMINATION.

6. THE FIL WAS PRODUCED IN LATE 1976 AT THE REQUEST OF THE GOB. BUT ONLY AFTER THE GOVERNMENT HAD ASKED THAT THE USG PRODUCE THE FILM AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF \$15,000 (REFTEL A).

7. AMBASSADOR DAVID BOLEN MET WITH USIA OFFICIALS ON NOV. 12, 1975, TO REQUEST THE AGENCY TO PRODUCE THE FILM, BUT WAS ADVISED FUNDS WERE NOT AVAILABLE (REFTEL B).

8. AS A RESULT, THE PRC FILM, WITH ALL ITS DISTORTION, IS THE ONLY ONE THE GOB HAS TO SHOW IN ITS SCHOOLS AND EMBASSIES AROUND THE WORLD.
JONES

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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Format: TEL
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197709109/aaaadnwy.tel
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